



# About the Commission

## Your Financial Aid Connection

The Commission has over 40 years of experience connecting students and families with the essential resources and services to make higher education possible.

Along with our experience, we continue to expand our capabilities and services to meet and exceed the needs of students, colleges and universities, lenders, and communities that we serve. We listen, understand, and respond with truth and integrity, to the changing needs of our customers. When it comes to service, our customers have our undivided attention. We serve you:

### AS A GUARANTOR

- The Commission is the designated guarantor for the state of Iowa.
- The Commission will save Iowa families over \$4.6 million this year by paying the 1% federal default fee on Stafford and PLUS loans guaranteed for the 2007-2008 award year.
- The Commission guaranteed over \$463 million in Federal Stafford and PLUS loans last year alone.
- The Commission oversees school and lender federal student loan programs.
- The Commission provides information and resources for all Iowans on student financial aid.

### AS AN ADMINISTRATOR OF STATE FUNDS

- The Commission administers nearly \$59.8 million each year in Iowa General Fund Appropriations for need-based scholarships, grants, work-study opportunities and loan forgiveness programs.
- The Commission actively pursues additional state funding for increased need-based aid awards.

### AS A PROVIDER OF REGULATORY GUIDANCE

- The Commission's focus is on service and ensuring that schools and lenders are provided answers and resources on program regulations.
- The Commission has first-hand knowledge about student loan policy changes. Its policy analyst, Carolyn Small, is a past Co-Chair of, and continues to serve on, the *Common Manual Policy Committee*.

### AS A RESEARCH RESOURCE

- The Commission annually conducts surveys and publishes findings on Iowa higher education, ethnic diversity, and other special studies and surveys.
- The Commission serves as the Federal IPEDS Coordinator for 69 Iowa colleges and universities.
- The Commission assists postsecondary institutions with state registration requirements.

### AS A RESEARCH RESOURCE, CONT.

- The Commission sponsors the annual Iowa Research Conference for Iowa higher education and other education-related researchers. The conference focuses on how research and data are used to formulate state, federal, and institutional policies.

## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES DESIGNED WITH YOU IN MIND

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

Our **Customer Relations Representatives** offer responsive, on-site service to colleges and universities. They have a wealth of industry knowledge and solid financial aid backgrounds.

The **Information Service Center** serves as a financial aid hot-line for students, schools, lenders, and other customers who need financial aid assistance.

The **iLink Service Center** is the Commission's loan processing unit. iLink provides exemplary customer service and is a one-stop-shop for schools with questions on loan processing, regardless of the lender.

### COLLEGE PLANNING AND OUTREACH

*Choices*, the State of Iowa's designated career and education planning software, is offered free of charge to all Iowa middle schools, high schools, and colleges and universities for the 2007-2008 school year. The web-based system provides information about career and education opportunities that match the student's profile.

The *Planning for Our Futures* guide is a free, financial planning guide for parents that provides information on how they can start preparing for their children's higher education costs.  
*Available in English and Spanish.*

The *Your Course to College* guide is a free, comprehensive publication that includes financial aid information, as well as a directory of Iowa colleges and universities, to assist with the college selection process.  
*Available in English and Spanish.*



**Iowa College Student Aid Commission**

200 10TH ST FL 4TH • Des Moines IA 50309-3609

Phone: 877-272-4456 • Fax: 515-725-3401

Email: [info@iowacollegeaid.gov](mailto:info@iowacollegeaid.gov) • Website: [www.iowacollegeaid.gov](http://www.iowacollegeaid.gov)

**Your Financial Aid Connection**

## INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS

**iSBS** is a free, web-based processing system that provides maximum flexibility for processing of FFELP and private student loans. This open system allows schools to process loans and view data reports for all lenders.

The **State Scholarship and Grant Payment System** is an online service that streamlines the reporting of state grant and scholarship information. The system makes the process more convenient for Iowa colleges and universities.

The **Commission Connection** is a secure, web-based system developed to exchange sensitive information between the Commission and its partners. Messages and files can be shared securely to comply with privacy laws.

## TRAINING AND RESOURCES

The Commission provides regional **training** in the spring and fall, one-on-one training for new professionals, and other specialized training as requested.

**Presentations and resources** are available on a variety of topics such as, entrance and exit counseling, constitution day programs, consolidation, and loan forgiveness. The Commission is willing to create and provide customized presentations on request.

**You've Got News**, the Commission's monthly electronic newsletter, keeps you updated on the Commission's products and services. The **ICSAC Alert** provides fast-breaking news on student financial aid program changes.

The Commission's **policy expert** is always available to assist with questions about federal regulations and financial aid administration.

## DEFAULT MANAGEMENT

**Student Assistantship Grants** provide funding to schools that support student counseling and financial literacy programs. A student assistant can better relate to their peers by bringing a new perspective and level of empathy that only a fellow student could share.

**It's Payback Time** is a new program currently being developed to provide students with basic information on budgeting, credit, and student loans. The program incorporates a Super Loan Team of superheroes to grab the attention of students.

The **Default Prevention Referral Program** allows colleges and universities to refer students, who may be at risk of default, to the Commission. The Commission will pro-actively work with these students to help ensure successful repayment.

The **Borrower Debt Management Service** provides schools with resources and information about graduating students that can be used in exit counseling sessions.

The **Delinquent Borrower by School Report** provides schools with an online list of their borrowers who are delinquent in repayment of their student loans.

## DEFAULT MANAGEMENT, CONT.

The annual **Default Prevention Symposium**, sponsored in part by the Commission, features financial literacy tools, examples of proven default prevention policies and practices, and national speakers with successful track records in developing comprehensive default prevention and borrower education programs.

## PUBLICATIONS

The Commission provides a full assortment of **free publications** that support students and families as they explore and finance educational opportunities beyond high school.

### **Planning for Our Futures - available in English and Spanish**

This guide provides parents with information on how they can start preparing for their children's higher education costs.

### **Your Course to College - available in English and Spanish**

This comprehensive guide includes financial aid information, as well as a directory of Iowa colleges and universities, to assist students and families with the college selection process.

### **Entrance & Exit Counseling Guides**

These counseling guides help students understand their loan obligations and manage student loan debt in an easy to understand format.

### **Student Loan Repayment Guide**

This informational guide prepares borrowers for repayment of their student loans. It helps students manage their student loan repayment obligations.

### **Financial Aid Brochures**

Adult Student Guide  
Funding for Foster Care Youth  
Helpful Websites  
How to Apply for Financial Aid  
Nursing Loan Forgiveness  
Scholarships and Grants  
Student Loans  
Teacher Loan Forgiveness

### **Fact Sheets**

About the Commission  
Academic Competitiveness/SMART Grant Fact Sheet  
Grad PLUS Loan Fact Sheet  
Higher Education Tax Benefits Fact Sheet  
Identity Theft Fact Sheet  
Parent PLUS Loan Fact Sheet  
Student Loan Consolidation Fact Sheet

### **Student Loan Charts**

Student Loan Interest Rate Chart  
Student Loan Program Comparison Chart

### **Informational Flyers**

Tools for Career Planning

